

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 3883

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT BG
SUBJECT: THE DEMISE OF THE GOJ FRONT

REF: DACCA 3797

1. THE GANOTANTRIK OIKKYO JOTE, THE POLITICAL FRONT FORMED
PRIMARILY BY THE AWAMI LLEAGUE, NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY/MUZZAFAR
AND THE JATIYA JANATA PARTY OF GENERAL OSMANI (WITH MEMBERS
OF THE OFFICIALLY BANNED COMMUNIST PARTY ASSISTING), CEASED
TO EXIST YESTERDAY (JUNE 19) AS OSMANI AND NAP/M LEADER
MUZZAFAR AHMED ISSUED STATEMENTS SAYING THEIR PARTIES WOULD
GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS. IN A SHORT PRESS RELEASE FOLLOWING
A THREE-DAY CONFERENCE OF OSMANI'S PARTY, IT WAS STATED THAT
THE JATIYA JANATA PARTY "DOES NOT LIKE TO BE FURTHER MIS-
UNDERSTOOD BY THE PEOPLE BY REMAINING IN THE GOJ". THE
STATEMENT SAID THAT THE PARTY DID NOT WANT TO BE FUR-
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THER ASSOCIATED WITH THE AWAMI LEAGUE, WHICH HAD SINCE
THE ELECTION ONLY REAFFIRMED ITS BELIEF IN THE BAKSALITE
IDEAS OF SHEIKH MUJIB. THE STATEMENT SAID THAT OSMANI
IN THE FUTURE "WOULD UNDERTAKE AN ORGANIZATIONAL TOUR
OF THE COUNTRY WITH OTHER PARTY LEADERS".

2. ON THE SAME DAY, MUZZAFAR AHMED, THE LEADER OF THE

NAP/M, TOLD A RALLY THAT, HENCEFORTH, HE WOULD SUPPORT PRESIDENT ZIA'S 19-POINT PROGRAM BECAUSE THE PROGRAM PLEDGED TO ENSURE FOOD, CLOTHING, SHELTER AND EDUCATION TO THE PEOPLE. HE ACCUSED THE GOJ (AND OSMANI) OF HAVING NEVER MADE ANY CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM (I.E., ECONOMIC CRITICISM) OF THE ZIA GOVERNMENT AND SUGGESTED THAT THAT HAD BEEN ONE REASON FOR LOSING THE LECTION. EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO THE LOSS, NEVERTHELESS, WAS THE PEOPLE'S KNOWLEDGE THAT DURING ITS DAYS OF POWER, THE AWAMI LEAGUE HAD "INDULGED IN CORRUPTION" AND HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR "LOOT, PLUNDER AND KILLING". MUZZAFAR DESCRIBED HIS OWN PARTY'S GOALS AS SOCIALISM FOR BANGLADESH, BUT HE EMPHASIZED THAT HE WAS NOT JEALOUS OF ZIA AND HAD NO INTENTION OF WANTING TO THROW ZIA OUT OF POWER.

3. COMMENT: IN PRACTICAL TERMS, THE GOJ WAS NEVER A VIABLE POLITICAL FRONT BUT WAS INSTEAD ONLY AN UNEASY ALLIANCE HELD TOGETHER AT THE BEGINNING BY THE ILLUSION OF AWAMI LEAGUE STRENGTH. WHEN THE AWAMI LEAGUE SUFFERED A DEFEAT, THE ALLIANCE HAD NO MORE MEANING.

4. NEITHER THE OSMANI NOR THE MUZZAFAR STATEMENTS ARE SURPRISING. OSMANI HAD STATED DURING THE CAMPAIGN THAT THE COMPONENT PARTIES OF THE GOJ WOULD CONTEST THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS SEPARATELY. MUZZAFAR'S APPARENT BREAK WITH THE AWAMI LEAGUE IS NO PARTICULAR LOSS TO CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT PARTY AND NO SIGNIFICANT GAIN FOR ZIA. THE SWITCH, HOWEVER, DOES INDICATE IN WHICH DIRECTION THE POLITICAL WINDS ARE SHIFTING, AS MUZZAFAR HAS MADE A CAREER OF CLUTCHING AT COATTAILS. HE DID IT WITH MAULANA BHASHANI, THEN MUJIB AND NOW ZIA; THE FIRST TWO WITH NO SUCCESS, NOR IS THE THRID LIKELY TO REAP THE BENEFITS MUZZAFAR HAS LONG COVETED.
SCHNEIDER

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